Scarcity of seeds in Punjab

346. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to colossal damage to crops in Punjab due to recent rains and floods, the scarcity of seeds for the coming rabi crops and next year's kharif looms large over the farmers;

(b) whether the future food production prospects in Punjab have been threatened due to recent rains and scarcity of seeds; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction in this regard and what further steps propose to take to make the availability of seeds to farmers in Punjab?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) Following the unexpected recent floods in Punjab, local shortages of wheat seeds for rabi 1988-89 have been reported.

(b) No precise assessment is available of the likely loss in foodgrain production because of the floods. The kharif foodgrain production target, however, is likely to be achieved.

(c) The Punjab Government is making arrangements to procure 7 lakh quintals of germination-tested good quality wheat from its own Food Department, State Civil Supplies Corporation and Marketing Federation for supply to the farmers to be used as seeds.

Pest menace to cotton crop in Punjab

347. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cotton crop in Punjab is facing a serious pest menace in the wake of bountiful monsoon rainfall during the season;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to send a team of experts from ICAR to save cotton crop in Punjab; and

(c) if so, by when; and if not, what other steps Government propose to take to save the cotton crop facing serious pest menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) The overall pest situation on current cotton crop in Punjab remained at a low ebb. However, at some places, moderate intensity of pest attack has occured, requiring pest control measures particularly in the districts of Ferozepur, Faridkot and Bhatinda.

(b) There is no proposal for sending a team of experts at present.

(c) The Government is ensuring regular pest and disease surveillance on cotton crop for advising timely plant protection measures.

Pesticides availability has also been ensured to enable the cotton growers to undertake plant protection measures against pest attack.

Damage due to floods in Punjab

348. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to recent floods, Punjab State has been affected badly;